

MYSTERY OF MADAME CARLIER

Romantic Tales of Missing Heirs

By WILLIAM M. CLEMENS

WE had better let Fox take a try at the case," said Sargent, senior, as he opened his letters with a penknife. Sargent, junior, who sat reading the college news in the morning paper, turned to his father with a half-smile.

"Do you think, father, that a young law clerk like Jimmy Fox can handle a proposition of this sort?"

"Why not?" replied Sargent, senior. "Fox is a clever young man, and he has all the tenacity and perseverance of his father. We've had this mystery of Madame Carlier in the office for the last two weeks, and nothing has been done. I've worked and you've worked; but with no results."

"Because the father of Jimmy Fox happens to be Jefferson Fox, the famous investigator of criminal mysteries, you think Jimmy is a born sleuth, eh?" laughed Sargent, junior, as he picked up his morning paper again and turned the leaves. "But I'm not knocking Jimmy," added the young man; "he may succeed where others fail."

And it was arranged that Jimmy Fox, the slender, yellow headed student in the law offices of Henry & Herbert Sargent, of 46 Wall-st., city of New York, should undertake the solving of the Carlier mystery.

ONE of the clients of Sargent & Sargent was the Fifth Avenue Bank for Savings, and two or three times a year the law firm received a memorandum of a dormant account with a request that the heirs of the missing depositor be found. Some unfortunate people had placed their savings there and died with their secret buried with them. Others, very forgetful, had gone abroad or moved away, leaving the money behind them.

Thus came the case of Madame Carlier into the hands of Sargent & Sargent.

YOUNG Jimmy Fox was called into the front office that morning, and Sargent, senior, told him all that was known concerning Madame Carlier.

"Now, Fox," said he, "we have few facts to work upon. You may take two weeks of time and expense money and root around in your own way, and see what you can do. Here are the known points as we get them:

"Madame Lucile Carlier was forty-six years old in May, 1876. She was born somewhere in Switzerland, and came to this country about 1865. It is supposed she was a widow and of the Roman Catholic faith. She was a teacher of German and French. From September, 1869, to July, 1870, she filled the school year at Vassar teaching the young ladies the two languages.

"Prior to going to Poughkeepsie she lived somewhere in New York and opened an account at the Fifth Avenue Bank. For a period of six years, from July, 1870, to May, 1876, she again resided in New York city, and banked her savings regularly. Where she lived the bank never knew.

"On the morning of May 16, 1876, she deposited a check for two hundred and twenty-five dollars and drew out one hundred dollars of her savings. The existing bank records show nothing as to the check, only the mere fact of her depositing the sum named. From that particular morning of May 16, 1876, not a word has been heard of Madame Carlier. She disappeared as completely as if she had suddenly vanished into vapor. There is in bank at the present moment to her credit the sum of twelve thousand four hundred and twenty-one dollars, principal and accrued interest.

"Now I have told you all the facts that we have been able to discover."

"The death records have been searched, I suppose?" suggested Fox reflectively.

"Thoroughly, for every year since 1876. She did not die in New York."

"And the college records?"

"Nothing there. The members of the faculty are long since dead."

"Have the city directories been examined?"

"Absolutely. Her name never appeared during all the years she resided in New York."

"And the teachers' agencies?"

"All have been searched, and no record of the woman exists."

"And you've advertised?"

"Yes, in a dozen of the leading newspapers of this vicinity."

"This is a most remarkable case, Mr. Sargent, and a difficult one," said Fox thoughtfully; "but I'll do my best with it."

HE walked out of the room serious and determined. The case had aroused the enthusiasm so marked in the illustrious work of his father, and he was keen for the problem before him.

"There is a scarcity of fact," he said to himself when he had reached his own room, "and the diffi-

culty lies in the chance that some of the few known facts are not facts at all, but fiction. One erroneous statement in a case like this may cause confusion and only make mystery more mysterious."

Arguing from these premises, he went over the facts slowly and carefully, making numerous notations and memoranda.

"If still living, she would be nearly eighty years old, and the chances are the woman is dead. If she was a widow, who was the husband and where are his relatives? There is not another Carlier known to exist as far as I can see after searching all the directories of the larger cities. What was her maiden name? Who were her parents? Had she a brother or sister? All these questions seem useless at the moment," mused Jimmy Fox, "because there is no answer to any of the questions. If I only could trace her place of residence in New York, some definite locality," he went on, "I should then have a starting point. There is a single chance. She was of the Roman Catholic faith."

Accordingly that very afternoon Fox sought the leading churches, interviewed various priests, and searched innumerable records; but the quest was fruitless.

IT was a family trait of the Fox mentality to do only one thing at a time, and to concentrate mind and effort upon that one thing, whether sleeping or waking. Consequently, at the dinner hour Jimmy Fox was sitting opposite an imaginary Madame Carlier, and later he called for a Lucile cigar at the corner store, and during the night he talked French in his sleep.

Early the next morning he was busy at the Astor Library, and found a catalogue of Vassar alumni. For 1870 and the subsequent two years he discovered a list of sixty graduates, and carefully noted their addresses, whether they had married or died in the intervening years, and what they had done since leaving the halls of their beloved Vassar.

He wrote letters that afternoon to every surviving Vassar graduate of the Madame Carlier era whose address was out of town. Some had become the wives of doctors, preachers, and novelists, and two were widows. And that very night he began a systematic personal canvass in the city of those estimable women who had been young in the days of Madame Carlier's year at Vassar.

"Your system is excellent," said Sargent, senior, when Fox had reported progress the following day, "and I feel confident that your canvass will bring results."

But Sargent reckoned with undue confidence. In the course of a week, young Fox had not discovered a single material fact. The Vassar graduates gave him no assistance.

"I have only a faint remembrance of such a person," wrote Mrs. Breen of Syracuse.

"The name is familiar; but that is all," said Mrs. Post of Pittsburgh.

"I regret I cannot assist you in anyway," wrote

Mrs. Smythe of Washington. "I only remember there was a teacher named Carlier at Vassar."

ON the tenth day of his search Fox visited the last graduate on his long list. She was a white haired old lady living in Brooklyn. And here he met with apparently great success. Yes, Mrs. Carpenter remembered Madame Carlier fairly well. The madame was a slender, delicate little woman, very modest, wearing a fluffy little dress. She had not been much of a success as a teacher of French and German; but was fond of music.

"She was a widow, as I understand," remarked Fox.

"Such was the impression," replied Mrs. Carpenter; "but she was a very uncommunicative person and told little of her affairs."

"And a Roman Catholic," suggested Fox.

"I think not," was the answer; "in fact, I feel positive that she was a Swiss Presbyterian."

"And how do you know that?"

"In her room at the college were two small prints labeled 'Wide Awake' and 'Fast Asleep.' I remember them distinctly. These pictures were given away about that time as premiums to subscribers to 'The Christian Union,' then edited by Henry Ward Beecher."

"You are right, Mrs. Carpenter. She was probably not a Roman Catholic," remarked Fox with growing enthusiasm.

Here was a clue at last, he thought, the first tangible thing that might lead him to ultimate success. Madame Carlier was a subscriber to "The Christian Union." There must be old subscription books somewhere. He would get the New York address of Madame Carlier, a definite street and a definite house, and from this point he could trace the lost woman and solve the mystery. But the old subscription books had been destroyed, and he could find naught of Madame Carlier or her New York address. The mystery was still a mystery.

As he walked homeward that night, downcast and discouraged, Jimmy Fox planned that the next morning he would visit the library and search the files of "The Christian Union." It seemed a hopeless task; but there was a mere chance that Madame Carlier had advertised in the paper for a situation. And the next day in a quiet alcove of the big library, with the files of the dead periodical piled high about him, he set about his tedious labor. For two days he worked; but with not a glimmer of light to throw on the dark mystery of the Vassar teacher.

"Is it possible for a human being to disappear as in a hole in the ground?" thought Fox as he opened the last file in the library. "Here is a woman of respectability and education, who walks out of a bank on a bright May morning, and from that moment is lost forever. There should be, must be, some explanation."

CHANCE has and always will be a great factor in material things. And it was Chance that gave Jimmy Fox new hope at the close of that second day in the library. He had turned to the last page of the last issue of the last file, when a chance paragraph of general news caught his trained eye. In a column of "Events of the Week" he read:

"Fifteen lives were lost on Tuesday last by the wreck of the steamship Lucile, near Marthas Vineyard."

Fox sat erect and rubbed his eyes. Strangely enough, Madame Carlier's name was Lucile. He laughed at the foolish thought of coincidence. Then he glanced at the date of the paper, Saturday, May 21, 1876.

What! Tuesday, the day of the disaster, was the seventeenth. Madame Carlier had paid her last visit to the bank on Monday, May 16.

Jimmy Fox rushed to the library desk. "'The Times' for May, 1876, if you please," he called.

A moment more he was nervously turning the leaves of the newspaper file, seeking an account of the Lucile disaster. There it was, a full column, telling how the steamship Lucile, bound for Boston, had left New York on Monday afternoon, had been caught in a fog on Tuesday morning, May 17, off the Massachusetts coast, and had struck a rock and sank. Of two hundred persons on board, all but fifteen were rescued by life savers from Marthas Vineyard. But a boat had capsized and fifteen had been drowned.

Fox ran down the list of the lost, and then, with eyes bulging and mouth open, he read these names: "Mrs. Carlier and her niece, Miss Jeannette Devoe, of Boston."

"Of Boston!" echoed Fox. "Mrs. Carlier was credited to Boston undoubtedly by mistake. That is why her New York acquaintances did not recognize the name at the time of the disaster."

The train to Boston ran very slowly that night, so

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A Feminine Utopia

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occasion of great rejoicing; for it means much more to the parents than the mere advent of an heir to their slender possessions. It makes permanent and sanctifies the marriage, which up to this time is not considered binding; for if at the end of a year no child blesses the union, the contracting parties are at liberty to seek new mates.

Girl babies are as welcome in the Hopi home as boys, and receive quite as much attention. Until the infant is a year old, the mother carries it about in a portable cradle made of a flat piece of wood covered with a buckskin pad. To this the baby is strapped, with its face protected by a shade, and so tightly is the tiny thing bound in this apparatus that it seems almost impossible for it even to wriggle its little toes.

The Christening Ceremony

THE christening of a child is one of the most beautiful and impressive of the many beautiful religious ceremonials of the Hopi. For nineteen days after the birth, the mother and child are kept indoors, and not a ray of sunlight is permitted to enter their room. At dawn of the twentieth day, the mother, arrayed in her bridal robes and accompanied by all her female relatives, walks to the very edge of the cliff, the desert lying hundreds of feet below. The grandmother carries the child and holds it until the time of the christening ceremony, while the mother and the other women form a half-circle round her, all facing the east.

Just before the sun appears, a high priest of the clan to which the mother belongs marches toward the waiting group and confers with the young mother and grandmother. The different women of the party have each selected a name for the little one,—no commonplace or meaningless names such as civilized babies are burdened with, but poetic phrases typifying some Nature element or living thing such as "Rushing Water," "Fleet Antelope," or "Golden Butterfly." The mother now takes the child, while the grandmother sprinkles a little cornmeal on its face and blows puffs of it toward the four points of the compass. Then, taking two ears of corn, she extends them toward the east, bringing them back with a circular motion and allowing them to rest for a moment on the child's breast.

The group, standing motionless and silent, now awaits the appearance of the sun, and when it rises majestically above the horizon of the trackless waste, the mother, with outstretched arms, lifts her child toward the glorious orb of day, while the priest calls out in a loud voice, "I consecrate thee to the God of Life!" and all the women shriek in unison the names that have been chosen; for each one has the right to choose. This ends the simple and significant ceremony, and the mother afterward selects the name that pleases her most, which remains the child's name until it has de-

veloped into manhood or womanhood, when it is initiated into the society of its clan and receives the name it carries through life.

Child life in Hopiland, especially in the summer, is one long holiday, with nothing to do, nothing to wear,—for which they are extremely thankful,—and plenty to eat. Generations of cliff life have made these youngsters veritable mountain goats, and they jump from rock to rock or from cliff to cliff, where a misstep would hurl them to death hundreds of feet on the rocks below. Children of both sexes up to four or five years old run around in a state of complete nudity, and only on state occasions are they compelled to wear clothes. When I first went among the Hopi people there was a good deal more nudity than can be seen at present. Now only the smaller children run in a state of nature, and even these are often compelled to don clothes at the approach of strangers.

In the Family Circle

I HAVE often, in wandering through the villages, looked in on my Indian friends and found the most perfect pictures of domestic bliss. Gathered generally near the meal stones or the open doorway, the little group would be squatted on the hard clay floor, the young mother caring for her baby and the father usually fondling an older child. Young girls would be busy at the meal stones, humming softly a melodious chant as they ground the corn into meal, occasionally looking up from their work to join in the general conversation. The grandfather, with quiet dignity and loving care, would be teaching a naked baby to walk, and the grandmother would be patiently explaining the mysteries of basket making to a young girl whose head rested against her shoulder. Friends of the family would drop in from time to time, and a place would be gladly made for them in the family circle. Conversation would soon become animated, and every witty remark would be greeted with generous laughter. The weather, the conditions of the crops, and the attitude of the Government agent would be the serious subjects under discussion; but village gossip and family affairs occupy considerable time.

We are taught to look upon primitive people as examples of crudity and given over to vicious and evil passions. White people usually believe the Indians to be far below themselves, both physically and intellectually. Nothing could be more erroneous. In physique they are better developed, and their senses are more acute than among the lower classes of our own people. In his behavior to his tribesmen as well as to the whites, the Indian is ceremonious and dignified. He is as modest in his ambition as he is in his demands on Nature. He never asks for more than he needs; he knows not the spirit of greed. He believes in the immortality of the soul, and his fervor in the worship of his gods is unexcelled.

Mystery of Madame Carlier

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Jimmy Fox said to a traveling companion in the smoking car. He had lost no time, and, believing now that his quest was nearing an end, he was hurrying northward on the first train.

Before he slept that night he had searched the Boston directories, old and new, for the names of Carlier and Devoe. He had found no Carliers; but there were a round dozen of Devoes, and with the addresses of all these in his coat pocket, he went to his hotel, anxious for the coming of to-morrow.

ON a side street in Cambridge, late the next afternoon, Jimmy Fox, representing the firm of Sargent & Sargent, sat in the presence of Miss Henrietta Devoe, spinster, age fifty-one. She was the surviving sister of Miss Jeannette Devoe, victim of the Lucile sea tragedy.

"My sister and my aunt were both lost in that terrible wreck," she said. "I was only eighteen then, and Jeannette was twenty. My sister had gone to New York to spend a week with Madame Carlier, and Lucile was coming to Boston to visit us for the summer."

"Where did Madame Carlier live in New York?" asked Fox.

"Oh, she didn't live in New York exactly; she boarded with an old couple in Yonkers, just outside of New York. Aunt Lucile was a very peculiar person. She was a widow, her husband having died soon after her marriage at Zurich. His death, I think, caused her to come to America. She was a plain little woman, my aunt, and just about lived in her trunk. All her belongings were with her on the lost steamship, and I knew there was nothing in Yonkers that belonged to her. I didn't even know the names of the old folks she boarded with, consequently I never wrote to them after Aunt's death."

"There's some money for her in New York, you say? Oh, for me? Well, well! I knew that Aunt was very economical and had some money saved up; but I always supposed she had it with her, and that it went to the bottom of the sea along with her trunk. And you say it amounts to twelve thousand dollars! So much as that belonging to her? Poor Aunt! Oh, you say I will get it all? My, my! What shall I do with it?"

AS Fox left the house of Miss Devoe he walked rapidly, filled with the spirit of victory. "It takes so little to explain things. after

all," he thought. "How great and deep and dark is mystery when every point is confused; and how simple, plain, and reasonable everything becomes when the facts are known and properly arranged! No wonder Madame Carlier's name never appeared in a New York directory, when she lived in Yonkers! No wonder New York and the Savings Bank never heard of her after that May morning, and it is not surprising that no inquiry was ever made concerning her money! How easy it all seems after you have finally been able to find out the whole truth!"

Some moments later a slender, yellow haired young man walked into the telegraph office in Cambridge and sent this message to 46 Wall-st., New York:

"Carlier heirs found. Have full proofs. Be home to-night."

AFRICA SHOULD FOLLOW SUIT

THE following preamble and resolutions were introduced in the lower House of the Legislature of a Western State in 1905, and referred to the Federal Relations Committee:

"Whereas, A statute exists in this State providing for the payment of a bounty on mountain lions' scalps, and

"Whereas, The Hon. Theodore Roosevelt, the Rough Rider President of the United States, is now touring the State with the avowed purpose of slaughtering all the mountain lions therein found, and

"Whereas, The slaughter thereof by the President of the United States supersedes the necessity of the bounty thus provided by law; therefore be it

"Resolved, That upon the departure of the said Theodore Roosevelt, Rough Rider President of the United States, with his knives so vividly portrayed in the newspapers of the United States, the law providing for a bounty upon mountain lion scalps should be repealed for two reasons:

"First, as a matter of economy.
"Second, because we must have mountain lions, and their multiplication should be encouraged, to the end that the said Theodore Roosevelt, Rough Rider President of the United States, may be induced to return to this State to repeat his acts of daring and prowess and thereby add to the fame of the State."

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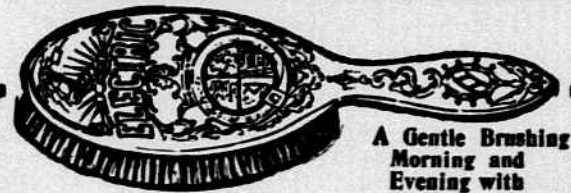
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